

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicant acknowledges, with thanks, the office action dated January 10, 2008, and completion of the personal interview of March 4, 2008. The Examiner's observations and suggestions are much appreciated and are summarized herein. Claims 1, 3-8, 10-15, 17-22, and 24-28 are currently pending.

The Examiner's acceptance of the drawings filed on September 30, 2003, is noted with appreciation.

The Examiner objected to claim 2 for an informality. Claim 2 has been cancelled, thereby rendering this objection moot.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-8, 10, 11, 13-15, 17, 18, 20-22, 24, 25, 27, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0147668 to Smith et al. (*hereinafter*, "Smith"). Claims 2, 5, 9, 12, 16, 19, 23, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,216,113 to Aikens (*hereinafter*, "Aikens"). In view of the amendments and arguments set forth below, it is submitted that all pending claims are patentably distinct over the art of record.

The subject application is directed to a system and method for automated accounting of document generating device usage comprising a plurality of document generating devices. Usage data representative of usage of a document generating device is acquired in accordance with a selected one of a plurality of user accounts, wherein the usage data includes at least one of copier usage data, print usage data, facsimile usage data, and scanning usage data. Report period data corresponding to a selected timing for transmission of accumulated usage data is received. Accumulated usage data from each of a plurality of document generating device operations is locally stored, and report period data is also stored. The usage data is periodically outputted to an associated accounting administrator in accordance with the report period data. A reset signal representative of a reset of at least a portion of accumulated usage data is received, and accumulated usage data is reset to a previous state upon receipt of a reset signal.

Relative to the art rejections, claims 2, 9, 16, and 23 have been merged respectively into their parent claims 1, 8, 15, and 23. The Examiner noted that the limitation added by these claims – that is, data representative of a number of facsimile transmissions and number of scanning images – is not disclosed in Smith. Accordingly, it is submitted that all rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Smith are removed.

Smith is directed to a job-based accounting system that emphasizes the importance of real-time financial information. Virtual accounts are updated with information relative to ongoing events. Users can access virtual accounts and retrieve information relative to transactions. See, e.g., Pars. 0053, 0056. Use of virtual accounts provides users with “up-to-the-minute” information. See, e.g., Par. 0056.

Aikens, cited as teaching the missing aspects of Smith noted above, is directed to a system for tracking billing information for printers. The system is embodied in a client/server architecture, wherein the client is provided with access to information available on a network device.

Neither Smith nor Aikens teach a system wherein an administrator can set particulars relative to monitoring document processing activity, as well as set periods over which reporting is to be pushed from a device. Further amendment to each of independent claims 1, 8, 15, and 23 has been made to further emphasize the novel aspects over the art of record. As amended, all claims now include limitations wherein selected user accounts are monitored relative to usage and such usage data is stored locally. The usage data is periodically pushed from a device at a timing specified by an administrator. An administrator can reset counters by sending a signal to a device in situations such as when the administrator acknowledges that appropriate information has been received. As discussed during the interview, these aspects are removed from the teachings of Smith or Aikens.

In accordance with the afore-noted amendments and comments, it is submitted that all claims are patentably distinct over the art and in condition for allowance thereover. An early allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.

Application No.: 10/675,773
Amendment dated March 12, 2008
Response to Office action dated January 10, 2008

If there are any fees necessitated by the foregoing communication, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0902, referencing our Docket No. 66329/31337.

Date: 3-12-08

Respectfully submitted,



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